

Message Text

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PAGE 01 QUITO 04871 142150Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
AID-05 /073 W
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P R 142109Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8794
INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, EC
SUBJECT: ECUADOREAN REACTION TO BOLIVIAN ELECTION

1. ECUADOREANS HAVE FOLLOWED WITH MUCH INTEREST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BOLIVIAN ELECTIONS. THE PRESS HAS CARRIED NUMEROUS WIRE SERVICE REPORTS, EDITORIAL COMMENTS AND LOCALLY GENERATED ARTICLES DISCUSSING THE REPORTS OF MASSIVE FRAUD IN THOSE ELECTIONS. PROBABLY THE MOST SIGNIFICANT WAS A LONG STATEMENT THAT APPEARED IN QUITO'S EL TIEMPO ON JULY 14 BY FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER JULIO PRADO, JUST BACK FROM LA PAZ WHERE HE WAS ONE OF THE OFFICIAL OAS OBSERVERS. PRADO DETAILED A NUMBER OF THE CONCERNS RAISED IN THE OAS OBSERVERS' REPORT, PARTICULARLY:
1) THE FACT THAT EIGHT INDIVIDUAL BALLOTS WERE USED LED TO FRAUD, SINCE ALL BALLOTS WERE NOT AVAILABLE AT ALL POLLING PLACES; 2) THAT THE EXISTENCE OF THE CAMPESINO-MILITARY PACT LIMITED ACCESS TO LARGE NUMBERS OF VOTERS TO ONLY THE GOB-SUPPORTED CANDIDATE; 3) THAT THE VOTING LISTS CONTAINED MANY ERRORS AND THAT THE SYSTEM USED DID NOT PREVENT INDIVIDUALS FROM VOTING SEVERAL TIMES. PRADO ALSO NOTED THAT THE POLITICAL PARTIES HAD HAD LITTLE TIME TO ORGANIZE
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THEMSELVES AND THAT, IN ANY EVENT, THE SHEER NUMBER OF PARTIES AND FRONTS PARTICIPATING MADE A RATIONAL ELECTION VERY DIFFICULT.

2. ECUADOREAN OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS AND A NUMBER OF POLITICIANS (INCLUDING PRADO) HAVE MADE STATEMENTS THAT THE ECUADOREAN SITUATION DIFFERS FROM THAT

IN BOLIVIA AND THAT FRAUD AS OCCURRED THERE COULD NOT OCCUR IN THE JULY 16 ELECTIONS HERE. THE MAJOR POINTS MADE ARE THAT THERE IS NO OFFICIAL CANDIDATE HERE AND THUS NO INCENTIVE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO ENGAGE IN FRAUD, AND THAT VOTING PROCEDURES (USE OF NATIONAL ID CARDS AS VOTER IDENTIFICATION, BALLOT CONTROL PROCEDURES, PARTICIPATION OF PARTIES AS OBSERVERS OF VOTING AND VOTE COUNTING, ETC.) HERE ARE BETTER DEVELOPED THAN IN BOLIVIA.

3. COMMENT: AS DESCRIBED IN SEPTTEL, THE GOE IS MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO INSURE BOTH CITIZENS AND THE WORLD AT LARGE THAT THE JULY 16 ELECTIONS IN ECUADOR WILL BE HONEST AND TOTALLY FREE. THE REACTION OF ECUADOREANS IN GENERAL TO THE BOLIVIAN ELECTION INDICATES THAT THE GOE'S ASSURANCES ARE ACCEPTED AND SHARED BY THE PUBLIC AT LARGE.

4. EMBASSY IS POUCHING COPIES OF PRADO'S STATEMENT TO DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY LA PAZ.
CORR

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